

name and activity continued into the '70s so that boys would refer to themselves as 'camp kids' even though they didn't know why."

Though urban development and social services have changed the scope and geography of homelessness, Juan is no doubt a modern camp kid: "I started turning tricks when I was 16. I've done it for drugs, food, a place to stay."

Social service agencies call this form of street prostitution "survival sex." It's generally the last option in a string of petty crimes for homeless people, particularly youth and heavy drug users of all sexual orientations. Although gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender youth reportedly represent a disproportionate number of the homeless youth population—30 percent by some estimates—same-sex street prostitution as an act of desperation is by no means limited to queer-identified youth.

"Straight guys go to Stark and know they're a commodity," reported Christa-Margaret Nelson of the Trans/Identity Resource Centre. "Some people reach a point where they don't care anymore about maintaining their sexual identity."

"You don't know cold until you sleep on the bricks of O'Bryant Square with jeans, a T-shirt and flip-flops," said David, 18, standing in a doorway near Stark Street and Eighth Avenue to escape the rain. "I went to bars and approached older men. Said 'Wanna go to the Roxy?' They paid and I went home with them—got a meal and a place to sleep."

The majority of Portland's street-based male and male-to-female transgender prostitution now occurs on or around Stark Street with its high concentration of gay bars. (Female-for-female prostitution, particularly on the street, seems rare to nonexistent.) Street prostitutes describe a process of being cruised by cars or men on foot who generally invite them into a car or alley, although downtown hotels, bathhouses and porn store video booths are also commonplace.

When asked, Benjamin, 22, recalled, "anywhere from alleys and bathrooms to hotels and huge houses," of his five years prostituting on the street after leaving an abusive home. "I've made from \$10 to \$500," he continued, explaining that the price is as often determined by the desperation of the prostitute as the generosity of the patron.

By all accounts, the street is undoubtedly the most distasteful and dangerous venue for sex work.

"Street walking is scary...I've been beaten, raped and left for dead. Raped more than once," said Doug.

Neither the city of Portland nor Multnomah County keep statistics regarding same-sex prostitution, nor has either formally investigated its high incidences of violence.

"Because we hardly spend the time investigating street-level prostitution, nobody really keeps numbers," said Greg Duvic, a Portland Police Bureau vice department investigator.

The Portland Bad Date Line, however, is keeping a watchful eye on predators of sex workers. A program run by the Trans/Identity Resource Centre and Multnomah County, the hot line prints and circulates detailed descriptions of abuse suffered by prostitutes that are rarely reported to the police.

Given the danger of the street, most prostitutes seek to graduate to other venues to cast their sideways glances. Traditionally, this has been the bar.

"Will you buy me a drink?" seems to be the opening line," according to Heather Smith, a security guard of the Boxxes, Brig and Fez compound. "Our security staff is on top of it, but there's better luck in the other bars on Vaseline Alley. In the past, there were definitely

dancers at Silverado and Three Sisters who were willing to accommodate."

Doug concurred: "You have to do private shows at Silverado. Some dancers make money, but they have regulars that they hang out with in various states of undress."

Silverado's general manager, Gary Opel, said he's not aware of dancers performing sexual favors on the clock. But on their own time, "They can do what they want."

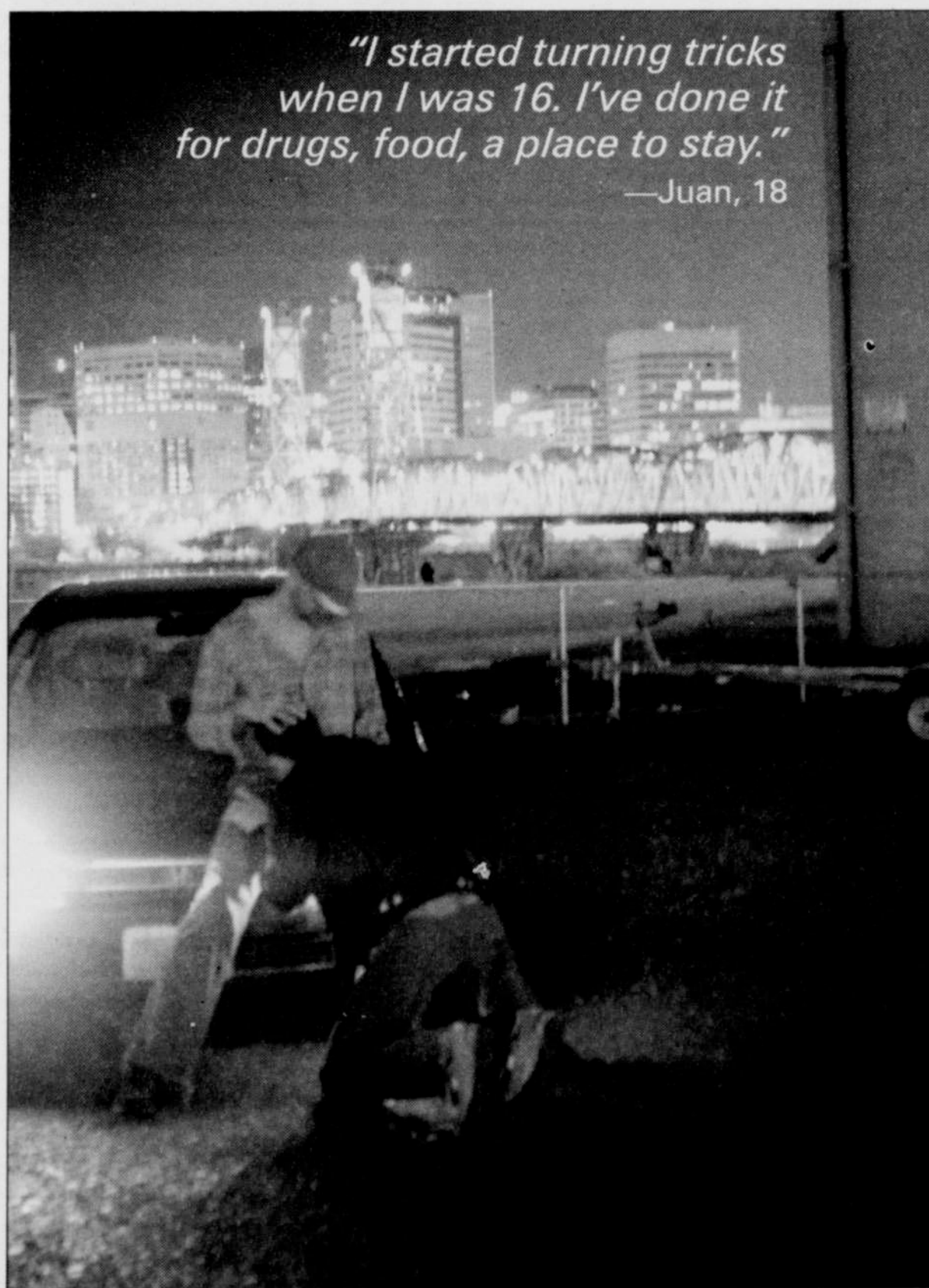
With the explosion of the Internet, "whatever you want" has taken on a whole new meaning.

The Start-Ups

Ryan and Travis satisfy customers in their basement dungeon, through the laundry room on the left. Before the alterna-porn fad of Suicide Girls, the pierced and tattooed Ryan started his own Web sites at age 20 to display photos of himself and boyfriends as "a social project to show fetishes and images of people like me that weren't being shown." He also sold worn clothing and his pornographic videos on the Web site Naughty Bids until one of his customers offered money for sex. Despite boyish features, Travis claims to have looked an adult since 14. While sleeping with men twice his age, he says, "A very random hookup just gave me money and then a light bulb went on." The two moved to Portland last year and advertise on Craigslist both together (\$200-\$300 an hour) and solo (\$150-\$200 an hour). "Even if I was working a high-paying job, I'd still do this as long as it's fun," says Ryan.

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*"I started turning tricks
when I was 16. I've done it
for drugs, food, a place to stay."
—Juan, 18*



Sex Work Speak

- **Sex worker:** Anyone who engages in sexual acts for profit, including porn stars, strippers and prostitutes. For the purposes of this report, sex workers were confined to street walkers, bar hustlers and Internet escorts.
- **Sellin' ass:** A no-euphemism-necessary term describing street-level sex work. "Whoring" and "hoeing" are also widely used.
- **Hustler:** Male sex worker who usually operates out of bars. A savvy hustler scores the goods without giving up the ass.
- **Escort:** Sex worker royalty who technically sells only the pleasure of his company but who is actually a glorified prostitute. Too classy for street walking, escorts primarily operate through agencies, newspaper ads and Internet sites.
- **John or trick:** The most widely used names for men who need to pay for sex. Subgroups include "trolls," "daddies," "hobbyists" and "cookie monsters."



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